

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 3-12 are presently pending in this application, Claims 2 having been canceled and Claim 1 having been amended by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Claims 1 and 4 were rejected as being anticipated by Fukushima et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,646,399, hereinafter Fukushima); Claims 3 and 5 were rejected as being unpatentable over Fukushima; Claims 6-12 were allowed and Claim 2 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicants appreciatively acknowledge the identification of allowable subject matter. The subject matter of Claim 2 has been incorporated into Claim 1, and Claim 2 is now canceled. In light of the indication in the outstanding Office Action that Claim 2 contains allowable subject matter, it is believed that amended Claim 1, as well as Claims 3-5 which depend therefrom, now contain allowable subject matter. Applicants reserve the right to seek protection of the invention defined by original Claim 1 in one or more continuation and/or divisional applications.

Consequently, the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance, and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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